

South Asia Earthquake

December 16, 2005 - Update



Photo: International Rescue Committee

IRC provides female aid workers to care for women in Pakistan

SOUTH ASIA EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND MAKES FIRST GRANT

The South Asia Earthquake Relief Fund, the effort headed up by five U.S. CEOs with donations from corporate and private donors, made its first grant for \$200,000 to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for emergency relief. Working in some of the hardest hit districts (Shangla, Batagram, Abbottabad, and Mansehra), the IRC is putting special emphasis on providing winterized bedding kits that include heavy cotton blankets, quilts, shawls and plastic sheeting.

Additional activities include:

- Identifying and registering vulnerable families;
- Distributing emergency food and non-food items;
- Conducting psychosocial counseling sessions to help survivors cope with earthquake-related trauma;
- Establishing women and children's support centers;
- Constructing simple pit latrines.

The conservative cultural norms of the region make women extremely vulnerable, especially those who head households due to the loss of the male family head. Women have limited economic options outside of the household. They are also less likely to seek

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relief or medical and psychosocial care since aid workers are primarily male, and it is not culturally appropriate for them to interact with women.

The IRC, which also implements USAID-funded earthquake relief, is one of the few agencies with female aid workers in Pakistan and is working to ensure women receive services and have access to culturally acceptable means to support their families.



Photo: USAID

USAID training on disaster response management will enable Pakistan to respond to disasters such as the earthquake

USAID SHARES EXPERTISE TO IMPROVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

In response to the Government of Pakistan's request for information on new disaster management systems, USAID sent two disaster response experts to meet with the Federal Relief Commission. They discussed responding to the challenges common to all disasters and how the United States has responded in different situations, such as the Asian Tsunami.

USAID also outlined the main elements of a program designed to improve emergency response that was developed for the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the 1990s. The program is currently being considered for use in India, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Nepal. *Continued...*



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Earthquake Update Continued

December 16, 2005

Continued...

Both presentations were well received by Government representatives, who noted they offered excellent ideas and some areas of potential follow-up as Pakistan begins to assess responses to the earthquake.



Photo: U.S. Navy / Department of Defense

A U.S. Army aircrew member oversees the unloading of shelter supplies by the Pakistan Army from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter

U.S. MILITARY PROVIDES VITAL ASSISTANCE

U.S. Department of Defense air support remains a critical element in the Pakistani military logistics chain for earthquake relief. As of December 8, the Defense Department had completed 2,013 sorties, carrying more than 5,366 short tons of humanitarian relief supplies in addition to passengers and medical evacuations. The supplies included 4,602 tents, 232,092 blankets, and 600 tent heaters.

The Pakistani military has assumed a great deal of responsibility in the relief effort, performing well under difficult circumstances. Not only have they proven effective in terms of reach and responsiveness but are also been keen to learn best practices from the donor community in addressing technical issues, such as camp management, distributing relief supplies, and water and sanitation. Moreover, with training from the U.S. military, the Pakistani military is building shelter for thousands of people each day.

FAST FACTS:

Government of Pakistan estimates:

Death toll: 73,338
Injured: 69,412
Homeless: 2.8 million

Government of India estimates :

Death toll: 1,309
Injured: 6,622
Homeless: 150,000

U.S. Assistance as of December 16, 2005:

Total U.S. Government Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance Pledged: \$510,000,000

- \$300 million in economic assistance
- \$110 million in U.S. military in-kind support for relief operations
- at least \$100 million anticipated from U.S. private contributions

USAID has provided nearly \$65.6 million in humanitarian assistance, including 22 flights carrying relief supplies to Pakistan and more than \$600,000 in assistance to India.

USAID provided funds to the UN, other international organizations, and supports 12 international NGOs in Pakistan and India. This includes \$19.3 million in response to the UN Flash Appeal. Specifically, this includes:

- \$3 million in shelter relief
- \$2 million in water and sanitation
- \$2 million in health programs
- \$12.3 million for humanitarian relief operations (airlifts, food, logistics, administration)

For more information on the earthquake and USAID's work, please see "South Asia Earthquake" at www.usaid.gov.

**For information on giving visit:
www.southasiaearthquake relief.org**